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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDEBOOK

### 1.1 PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION OF GUIDEBOOK

The purpose of this guidebook is to advise public housing agencies (PHAs) and other organizations providing services to PHAs regarding the administration of the tenant-based subsidy programs. The housing choice voucher program will fully replace the rental certificate and rental voucher programs no later than October 2001. Where appropriate, this guidebook includes discussion of the conversion of certificates and vouchers to housing choice vouchers.

The guidebook includes an historical review of the tenant-based rental assistance programs, discusses program requirements in detail, and provides helpful administrative practices currently used by PHAs that operate the program. This guidebook does not cover the moderate rehabilitation program and the project-based certificate program.

In general, this guide chronologically introduces the sequence of events experienced by a family participating in the program. The guidebook begins discussion with outreach and program plans, and proceeds to program participation, including applications and eligibility, leasing, inspections, rent reasonableness, reexaminations, and termination of assistance by a PHA. This guidebook also includes chapters about financial management, program administration staffing, and program integrity. The table of contents provides a detailed listing of chapter titles and contents.

This guidebook does not include HUD-required forms, but it does contain sample forms and form letters that PHAs may find useful. Program forms are located in Handbook 7420.8 and on the worldwide web at [www.hudclips.org](http://www.hudclips.org).

This introductory chapter provides helpful background information for program administrators. Topics include: a brief history of the program and the funding application process, special types of housing choice vouchers, the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP), roles and responsibilities of key program players, and a summary flow chart of key steps in a family's program participation.

### 1.2 BACKGROUND AND KEY EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE TENANT-BASED HOUSING PROGRAMS

#### **United States Housing Act of 1937**

The U.S. Housing Act of 1937 authorized local PHAs established by individual states. The 1937 Act also initiated the public housing program. Local PHAs owned and managed public housing and, at the time the public housing program began, PHAs adopted a production approach to providing affordable housing for low-income families because of the Depression Era emphasis on job creation and slum elimination.

For nearly 30 years, public housing that was owned and managed by local PHAs was the primary source of housing assistance for low income families. Over time, the federal government strategy for housing assistance shifted from sole involvement by PHAs toward involvement by the private housing sector.

### **Section 23 Leased Housing Program**

Implemented in 1965, the Section 23 program was the first PHA administered housing program to use privately owned housing. Under the Section 23 program, PHAs leased units from private owners and sublet them to low-income families. PHAs retained tenant selection, rent collection, and, in some cases, management/maintenance responsibilities.

The Section 8 existing housing program replaced the Section 23 program in 1974. PHAs were required to convert Section 23 assisted units to the Section 8 existing housing program. Only a few developments still need to be converted.

### **Housing Act of 1968**

The Section 235 homeownership program and the Section 236 rental program created by the 1968 Housing Act continued the strong movement toward using subsidies in privately developed, privately owned housing.

### **Experimental Housing Allowance Program (EHAP)**

The EHAP was the most extensive social program demonstration ever conducted by the federal government. It tested the feasibility of providing housing allowances to eligible families and was conducted in 12 locations between 1971 and 1980. This demonstration was the earliest form of federal tenant-based subsidy. Over a nine-year period, nearly 50,000 households received cash assistance. Participants leased units directly from private owners, and homeowners as well as renters were able to participate at two of the demonstration sites.

HUD's evaluation of the EHAP demonstration found that:

- A housing allowance-type program could preserve existing housing stock by encouraging owner repairs and maintenance.
- Allowing families mobility allowed families to select better neighborhoods.
- Families did not select expensive units, and were able to pay their share of the rent in the selected units.

## **The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974**

The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, enacted several years after the start of the EHAP, authorized the Section 8 program. This legislation signaled a significant shift in the federal housing strategy from locally owned public housing to privately owned rental housing. The Section 8 program included two components:

- Section 8 project-based assistance for existing, newly constructed or rehabilitated housing. These programs replaced the Section 236 programs as the federal government's production programs for privately-owned assisted housing providing housing assistance to families living in specific buildings built or rehabilitated under program contracts; and
- The Section 8 existing housing program, a newly created housing assistance program to be administered by PHAs provided tenant-based subsidies. Under this program, sometimes called the "finders keepers" or "certificate" program, families selected their own housing, and the subsidy followed the family when the family moved.

### **The Section 8 Existing Housing Program**

Authorized by the 1974 Housing Act, the Section 8 existing housing program, also known as the rental certificate program, was modeled on the EHAP, but had the following key differences:

- Under the rental certificate program, the PHA made subsidy payments directly to the owners on behalf of the family rather than making payments to the family; and
- The rental certificate program imposed a HUD-established ceiling (fair market rent) on the gross rent for a unit leased under the program.

Under the rental certificate program families generally paid 25 percent of adjusted income toward the rent; in 1983 this family share increased to 30 percent of adjusted income.

The program grew rapidly and was popular with Congress, local governments, owners, and low income families because it:

- Provided assistance quickly;
- Allowed family a choice of housing and anonymity;
- Dispersed families throughout the community and did not create projects or site selection problems; and
- Was a relatively inexpensive program, per family assisted.

## **Rental Voucher Program**

Authorized by Congress as a demonstration program in 1984, the rental voucher program was formally authorized as a program in the Housing and Community Development Act of 1987. The program was similar to the rental certificate program, but it allowed families more options in housing selection. The key differences between the rental certificate and rental voucher programs were:

- The rental voucher program did not have a fair market rent limitation; and
- The rental voucher program provided assistance to families based on a pre-determined calculation of assistance amount. Depending on the cost of the housing they actually rented, families could pay more or less than 30 percent of adjusted income toward rent.

## **The Conforming Rules to Combine the Certificate and Voucher Programs**

HUD issued three “conforming” rules in 1994, 1995, and 1998 to more closely combine and conform the rental certificate and rental voucher programs to the extent permitted by law.

In July 1994 and July 1995, HUD published the first two parts of a “conforming” rule designed to combine all aspects of the two programs that did not have different statutory requirements. The July 1994 rule established unified admissions rules. The 1995 rule standardized a wide range of other administrative and leasing activities.

A third conforming rule was published in June 1998. It addressed rent reasonableness, the calculation of rent and housing assistance payments, and the use of special housing types.

While these conforming rules made vouchers and certificates as similar as possible under existing legislation, there were still fundamental differences in establishing unit rents and the rent share paid by program participants.

## **The Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (QHWRA) and Merger of the Certificate and Voucher Programs**

In October 1998, Congress passed housing reform legislation, including a full merger of the certificate and voucher programs. This legislation eliminated all differences, and required that the subsidy types merge into one housing choice voucher program.

In May 1999, HUD published an interim rule providing for the complete merger of the certificate and voucher programs into the new housing choice voucher program. The certificate program is to be phased out by October 2001. This interim rule was effective October 1, 1999, which is known as the merger date.

### **1.3 CONVERSION FROM THE RENTAL CERTIFICATE AND RENTAL VOUCHER PROGRAMS TO THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM**

The change of assistance from the certificate and voucher program to the housing choice voucher program started October 1, 1999. Effective immediately, all rental vouchers and over-FMR certificate tenancies became subject to requirements of the housing choice voucher program. This was possible because the housing choice voucher program was modeled on these programs, and the housing assistance payments contracts for those tenancies allowed for changes in computing unit subsidy and family share of rent based upon HUD program rules.

Unlike the pre-merger voucher program, the housing choice voucher program requires families to pay at least 30 percent of income toward rent.

Families receiving assistance under the rental certificate program will transition to housing choice vouchers at the earliest of the following dates: date they move to a new unit with assistance, date they sign a new lease for the same unit, date they agree to convert to housing choice voucher assistance, or the date of their second annual reexamination on or after October 1, 1999.

Exhibit 1-1, *Summary of Differences Between Pre-Merger Certificates and Housing Choice Vouchers*, contains a chart that highlights the major differences between these two forms of assistance. Additional information on the conversion of rental certificate and rental voucher assistance to the housing choice voucher program is included in Chapter 14, *Conversion of Certificates and Vouchers*.

### **1.4 APPLYING TO HUD FOR ADDITIONAL HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER ASSISTANCE**

Periodically, Congress appropriates funds for distribution to PHAs for additional housing choice vouchers. These funds may be earmarked for special populations, or they may be available to the general eligible population. Generally, funding awards are competitive.

When funding for additional assistance is available, HUD publishes a notice of funding availability (NOFA) informing PHAs that funding is available and describing the application process, the rating and ranking procedures, and the deadline for application submission. The NOFA describes any special population for which the funding is earmarked, or if the funding is to be allocated by fair share formula, the NOFA also describes the fair share calculations to be used in determining the amount of funding to be awarded to HUD-designated allocation areas. PHAs are required to meet general performance requirements to be eligible to receive additional subsidy (e.g., having at least 90 percent of any previously allocated units under lease and Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contract). The NOFA describes rating and ranking criteria on which applications will be approved for funding. HUD notifies the PHA of the approval or disapproval of its application.

**EXHIBIT 1-1**  
**SUMMARY OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRE-MERGER CERTIFICATES AND**  
**HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHERS**

| Topic  | Certificates  | Housing Choice Vouchers   |
|--|---|---|
| Fair Market Rents (FMRs) and Payment Standards | No new certificates will be issued. Therefore, FMRs no longer affect certificates. Payment standards do not apply to certificates.  | The PHA sets the payment standard between 90% and 110% of the FMR. Families may lease a unit that rents for more or less than the payment standard.   |
| Family Share                                   | The total tenant payment (TTP) is the greater of 30% of adjusted income, 10% of gross income, the welfare rent (in as-paid states only) or the PHA minimum rent. Families may not make side payments or elect to pay more than the TTP. | The TTP is the greater of: 30% of adjusted income, 10% of gross income, the welfare rent (in as-paid states only), or the PHA minimum rent. If the family chooses a unit with a gross rent that exceeds the payment standard, the family pays the TTP plus the amount by which the gross rent exceeds the payment standard. |
| Subsidy  | The subsidy is the difference between the TTP and the gross rent. The gross rent cannot exceed the FMR limit.   | The subsidy is the difference between the TTP and 1) the payment standard or 2) the gross rent, whichever is lower.   |
| Affordability                                  | Family rent is based on income. There was no affordability standard.  | The family may not pay more than 40% of monthly adjusted income at admission or when a family moves to a new unit with a gross rent that exceeds the payment standard.  |
| Rent Increases                                 | Annually on the anniversary date, the PHA uses annual adjustment factors published by HUD to approve rent increases which are subject to a rent reasonableness test.  | Rent increases are not limited by the annual adjustment factor but are subject to a rent reasonableness test.   |

PHAs may also be invited to apply for additional funding, not in response to a NOFA, but as a result of housing conversion actions in which private owners of assisted properties have prepaid a HUD-insured mortgage or opted out of a project-based HAP contract. In these cases, the PHA responds to a specific request from the local HUD office and submits an application for housing choice voucher funding to assist tenants affected by terminations of project-based assistance. Circumstances which can result in such applications are described below in the section on housing conversion actions.

**Funding to Assist Special Categories of Families to be Selected From the PHA Waiting List**

In addition to regular allocations of housing choice voucher assistance, HUD periodically provides assistance targeted to specific groups or household categories. For such allocations, PHAs use their waiting lists to select families that fall into the specific targeted assistance categories. The following are some examples:

- **Family Unification Program:** Family unification program (FUP) allocations are provided to PHAs to assist families who have lost, or are in danger of losing, their children to foster care, but who may be able to retain custody of their children or reunite the family if they can obtain adequate housing. From their waiting lists, PHAs select families that have been identified or referred to the PHA by the local public child welfare agency as program candidates based on family circumstances. In addition to meeting the public child welfare agency criteria, families selected for FUP assistance must meet basic housing choice voucher eligibility requirements.

The public child welfare agency and the PHA sign a memorandum of understanding. Under the memorandum of understanding, the responsibilities of the PHA and the public child welfare agency are identified.

- **Welfare-to-Work Voucher Program:** In Fiscal Year 1998, Congress appropriated approximately \$283 million to fund 50,000 housing choice vouchers intended to help eligible families transition from welfare to work and/or sustain work. This program requires PHAs that receive funding to work with service agencies in the locality, providing a coordinated service package to help families move from welfare to work. The housing choice voucher program provides the critical element of housing assistance during this period.

These housing choice vouchers are available to applicant families who are eligible to receive, currently receive, or have received TANF assistance within the last two years. Families who are on the housing choice voucher waiting list and meet the basic eligibility and the PHA's selection criteria, receive housing choice vouchers to search for housing in the private market.

- **Mainstream Housing Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities:** Periodically, housing choice voucher funding is available to PHAs and nonprofit organizations that provide services to disabled families. The housing choice voucher assistance enables elderly and non-elderly persons with disabilities, who often face difficulties locating suitable and accessible housing on the private market, to lease affordable housing of their choice.

Housing choice vouchers are available to eligible disabled families regardless of the type of disability; preferences based on type of disability are prohibited. Recipients for this assistance are selected from the regular housing choice voucher waiting list.

### **Funding to Assist Families Who Are Not on the PHA Waiting List: Special Admissions**

Special admissions may occur when HUD allocates funding for families residing in specific housing. In these cases, the funding is intended for families in specifically identified circumstances without regard to waiting list status; the families are not required to be on the PHA waiting list at all. The funding has been provided to assist these specific families, and they must have the opportunity to use the housing choice vouchers to locate housing. After all designated families living in the identified housing have been assisted and when the housing choice voucher

turns over, the funding may be used for families from the regular housing choice voucher waiting list. The following are some examples:

- Public Housing Demolition/Disposition/Vacancy Consolidation: PHAs receive allocations of housing choice voucher funding to be used for families who will be displaced as a result of public housing demolition, disposition, or vacancy consolidation actions. The housing choice vouchers must be issued to these families to find alternative housing before the displacement is required.

Funding may be placed under annual contributions contracts (ACCs) before it is actually needed. PHAs must ensure that the assistance is made available for families for whom the funding was earmarked.

- Mainstream Housing – Elderly Designation (i.e., Rental Assistance for Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities in Support of Designated Housing Plans): HUD may allocate housing choice voucher funding to assist non-elderly families with disabilities. This voucher funding is intended to provide sufficient alternatives to non-elderly disabled families who would otherwise have been housed by the PHA if a project or building had not been restricted solely to elderly households. The funding can also be allocated to PHAs that wish to continue designating their buildings as “mixed elderly and disabled buildings” but can demonstrate a need for alternative resources for non-elderly disabled families.

This assistance is targeted solely to non-elderly disabled families that are income eligible and live in public housing that has been designated for occupancy by the elderly. It is not necessary for these families to be on the housing choice voucher waiting list. The funding may also be used for non-elderly disabled families that are on the PHA’s waiting list for public housing.

- Moderate Rehabilitation Contract Expirations: Moderate rehabilitation contracts are fifteen-year agreements between a PHA and private owner, regarding specific units in a single-family or multifamily property. Rental assistance is provided to families living in these units. If, at the end of the fifteen-year HAP contract term, the owner decides not to renew its HAP contract, HUD provides a special allocation of voucher funding to the PHA, so that families living in the property do not lose their assistance as a result of the HAP contract expiration. The families may use these housing choice vouchers in their current units, or may move with the housing choice voucher assistance.
- Project-Based Assisted Housing Conversion Actions: When a HAP contract for a project-based assisted development ends, in a housing conversion action, HUD will make housing choice vouchers available to protect families that reside in the units and families that were assisted under the project-based HAP contract. HUD publishes notices which describe the actions to be taken by owners and HUD offices at the time a project-based HAP contract ends. PHAs are invited to apply for allocations of housing choice vouchers targeted for families living in a project undergoing a housing conversion action. These housing choice

vouchers are sometimes called “enhanced vouchers”. They are for families that continue to live in the same unit when an owner elects to opt out of a project-based HAP contract.

Rules regarding administration of these vouchers vary from regular housing choice voucher rules with regard to the payment standard used in subsidy calculations if the family elects to remain in the same project. HUD notices specify special rules to be used for administration of assistance to tenants who are affected by housing conversion actions.

Project-based assisted housing conversion actions include the following:

- **Project-based opt-outs**. This term refers to a conversion action where an owner chooses to opt out of certain programs by not renewing an expiring Section 8 project-based HAP contract. Starting in FY 2000 and subject to the availability of appropriations, enhanced vouchers are provided for eligible residents who were assisted under the expiring project-based contract on the date of expiration.
- **Pre-payment of HUD-insured mortgage**. This term refers to a conversion action where an owner chooses to pre-pay a HUD-insured mortgage on a Section 8 property. Starting in FY 2000 and subject to the availability of appropriations, enhanced vouchers are provided for the eligible residents who were assisted under the project-based contract on the date of the pre-payment.
- **HUD enforcement actions**. This term refers to situations where HUD is either terminating the Section 8 project-based HAP contract or, due to the owner’s failure to comply with the terms of the HAP contract, not offering the owner the option to renew an expiring contract. HUD enforcement actions may also result from material adverse financial or managerial actions or omissions which have led to either owner default under a FHA-insured mortgage (monetary or technical) or documented material violations of one or more of the obligations under the project’s regulatory agreement. In these circumstances, regular housing choice vouchers will be provided to assist eligible families affected by the enforcement action.
- **HUD property disposition**. This term refers to situations where, due to an owner default on an FHA-insured mortgage, HUD is the mortgagee-in-possession or owner of the multifamily property and is closing down or selling the property to a new owner. Regular housing choice vouchers will be provided to assist eligible families in these cases.

## **1.5 THE SECTION 8 MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (SEMAP)**

SEMAP was designed by HUD as a tool to measure the performance of PHAs administering the housing choice voucher program and the family self-sufficiency (FSS) component of the voucher program.

SEMAP is a performance measure tool designed to:

- Assess whether the housing choice voucher program is assisting eligible families to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing at the correct subsidy cost;
- Measure PHA performance in key areas of the housing choice voucher program to ensure program integrity and accountability;
- Identify PHA management capabilities and deficiencies to target technical assistance more effectively; and
- Assist PHAs in assessing and improving their own program operations.
- Evaluate whether the PHA affirmatively furthers fair housing.

#### SEMAP INDICATORS

SEMAP includes the following 14 performance indicators and one bonus indicator:

- Indicator 1, Selection from the waiting list
- Indicator 2, Rent reasonableness
- Indicator 3, Determination of adjusted income
- Indicator 4, Utility allowance schedule
- Indicator 5, HQS quality control inspections
- Indicator 6, HQS enforcement
- Indicator 7, Expanding housing opportunities
- Indicator 8, FMR limit and payment standards
- Indicator 9, Annual reexaminations
- Indicator 10, Correct tenant rent calculations
- Indicator 11, Pre-contract HQS inspections
- Indicator 12, Annual HQS inspections
- Indicator 13, Lease-up
- Indicator 14, Family self-sufficiency (FSS) enrollment and escrow accounts
- Deconcentration bonus indicator

During the PHA fiscal year, PHAs must track their own performance on the 14 SEMAP indicators and the deconcentration bonus indicator if applicable. Within 60 days of the end of the PHA fiscal year, the PHA must complete and submit form HUD-52648, SEMAP Certification to HUD.

The certification must attest to the results of quality control review the PHA performed on four indicators: selection from the waiting list; rent reasonableness; determination of adjusted income; and HQS enforcement.

With the certification, the PHA must submit information regarding payment standards, data on FSS enrollment and escrow accounts and an addendum to support any claim for the deconcentration bonus indicator.

Each indicator is assigned a numerical value, based upon PHA performance. HUD independently assesses and verifies each PHA's performance using data submitted electronically through HUD's Multifamily Tenant Characteristics System (MTCS) using the Family Report, form HUD-50058 and other available information.

Once all indicators have been scored, the overall score is determined by summing all earned points and dividing by the total possible points.

HUD will prepare a SEMAP profile for each PHA, assign an overall rating, and notify each PHA in writing of its rating on each SEMAP indicator, its overall SEMAP score, and its overall performance rating.

There are four possible overall ratings:

- High Performer Rating: score of 90 percent or higher
- Standard Performer Rating: score of 60 percent to 89 percent
- Troubled Performer Rating: score of less than 60 percent
- Modified or Withheld Rating: only when warranted by special circumstances

If a PHA receives a troubled rating, the HUD field office must conduct an on-site confirmatory review before changing the rating to either "standard performer" or "high performer."

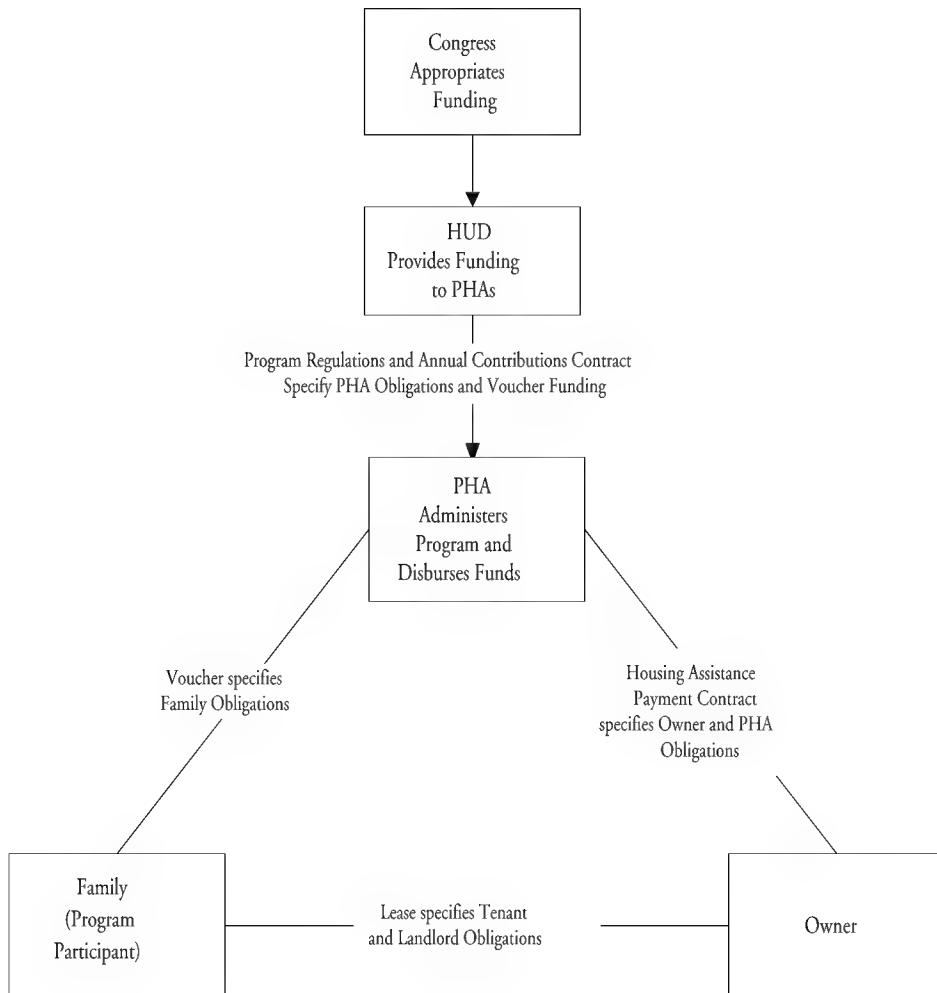
PHAs are required to correct any performance deficiencies within 45 days of notification by HUD. If the PHA is unable to correct deficiencies within 45 days, it must submit a corrective action plan for each deficiency within 30 calendar days from the date of the HUD notice.

## **1.6     ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PLAYERS**

PHAs administering the housing choice voucher program enter into contractual relationships with three parties: HUD, the owner, and the family. The roles and responsibilities of HUD, the PHA, the owner, and the family are defined in the federal regulations and in the legal documents that the parties execute to participate in the program.

Exhibit 1-2, *Relationship and Controlling Documents in the Housing Choice Voucher Program*, illustrates the relationships that exist at the federal and local levels, and identifies the legal documents defining these relationships for the housing choice voucher program.

**EXHIBIT 1-2**  
**RELATIONSHIP AND CONTROLLING DOCUMENTS IN THE**  
**HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM**



The annual contributions contract (ACC) between HUD and the PHA provides the PHA with funding for housing assistance to very low-income households, and establishes the PHA's responsibilities in administering this funding.

## **Role of HUD**

HUD has four major responsibilities:

- Develop policy, regulations, handbooks, notices, and guidance to implement housing legislation;
- Allocate housing assistance funds;
- Provide technical assistance and training to PHAs; and
- Monitor PHA compliance with program requirements and performance goals.

## **Role of the PHA**

The PHA administers the housing choice voucher program under contract with HUD and has the following areas of responsibility:

- Establishing local policies;
- Determining family eligibility and reexamining of family income;
- Maintaining the waiting list and selecting families for admission;
- Calculating of family share of the rent and the amount of the housing assistance payment;
- Establishing of utility allowances;
- Conducting outreach to owners, with special attention to those with units outside of areas of poverty or minority concentration;
- Assisting persons with disabilities in finding satisfactory housing;
- Approving units, including assuring compliance with housing quality standards and determining the reasonableness of rent;
- Making housing assistance payments to owners;
- Conducting informal reviews and hearings at the request of applicants and participants challenging PHA administrative decisions;
- Administering the FSS program; and

- Complying with fair housing and equal opportunity requirements, HUD regulations and requirements, the consolidated ACC, HUD-approved applications for program funding, the PHA's administrative plan, and federal, state and local laws.

PHA responsibilities are defined in the consolidated ACC, the HAP contract, and in applicable regulations. Generally, the PHA does not own the assisted unit and does not perform owner functions. However, PHAs may screen applicants for family behavior or suitability for tenancy.

### **Role of the Owner**

The owner has the following major responsibilities:

- Screening tenants, selecting tenants, and entering into leases with tenants;
- Complying with the HAP contract, lease, and tenancy addendum;
- Carrying out normal owner functions during the lease term, such as enforcing the lease, performing maintenance, collecting the family share of rent from the family, and charging tenants for any damage to the unit;
- Maintaining unit compliance with HQS;
- Complying with fair housing and equal opportunity requirements; and
- Paying for utilities, maintenance, and services (unless paid for by the family under the lease).

Owner responsibilities for the housing choice voucher program are defined in the HAP contract, the lease, and HUD regulations at 24 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 982.

### **Role of the Family**

Responsibilities of the family include:

- Supplying true and complete required information including:
  - Any information that the PHA or HUD determines necessary in the administration of the program, including evidence of citizenship or eligible immigration status;
  - Information as requested for regular or interim reexaminations of family income; and
  - Social security numbers and signed consent forms for obtaining and verifying information;
- Fixing any breach of HQS caused by the family;

- Allowing the PHA to inspect the unit at reasonable times and after reasonable notice;
- Not committing any serious or repeated violation of the lease;
- Not engaging in drug-related criminal activity or violent criminal activity;
- Notifying the PHA and the owner before moving or terminating the lease with the owner;
- Promptly giving the PHA a copy of an eviction notice from the owner;
- Using the assisted unit as a residence only and as the only residence of the family. Members of the household may engage in legal profit-making activities within the unit, but only if those activities are incidental to the primary use of the unit as a residence. The members of the family also may not receive another housing subsidy in the same unit or a different unit;
- Promptly informing the PHA of any change in household composition and obtaining PHA approval to add a family member by any means other than birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody of a child;
- Notifying the PHA of any absence from the unit and complying with PHA policies governing absence from the unit;
- Not subletting the unit, assigning the lease, or having any interest in the unit; and
- Not committing fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any assisted housing programs.

Family obligations are stated on the Housing Voucher (form HUD-52646), in the lease, and in the program regulations at 24 CFR, Part 982, for housing choice voucher holders.

Exhibit 1-3, *Key Activities in Program Administration*, summarizes key activities in program administration for both PHAs and program participants. The remainder of this guidebook provides detailed guidance on all aspects of program operations.

**EXHIBIT 1-3**  
**KEY ACTIVITIES IN PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

